

Office for the Arts
Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
GPO Box 594 | CANBERRA ACT 2601

[REDACTED]

22/5/26

I am an author (poet and essayist) of significant accomplishment: I have multiple books published (number five and six will be published in 2026 and 2027) and recognition in a range of poetry prizes, most recently a shortlisting in the [REDACTED] I recently completed a creative Practice PhD which was awarded [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I have presented at Interstate and International conferences and readings most recently on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] I will continue to represent my country and my field, presenting my research and creative work at local, interstate and International gatherings. However, despite over 30 year's experience and working almost full time at my profession, I cannot earn a living under current arrangements. Poets are supported even less by their publishers than novelists with many boutique publishing houses funded by the publishers themselves.

According to the Australia Council: funding for literature has declined by 40% over the last decade, with only 2.4% of the total 2020-21 Australia Council arts investment spent on literature – the lowest of the major artforms.

I am grateful for the initiatives introduced in *Revive* to assist with the sustainability of author and illustrator careers. However, since the introduction of *Revive*, authors have been facing increasingly precarious conditions. Without immediate support, we risk the viability of the book industry in Australia.

I am calling for:

- Equitable funding across artforms and within the literary field so that funding for poetry (the artform ordinary people turn to at momentous life occasions) is on par with fiction.
- I urge the government to adopt a living wage scheme to support its creatives.
- Public funding must be contingent on authors and illustrators being paid minimum rates of pay.
- Tax exemptions for literary prizes, grants and fellowships, and the establishment of an Australian Poet Laureate.

I agree with Jennifer Rowe AC (pen name Emily Rodda), who wrote, 'For a long time, we've taken our literature for granted. To a certain extent, we've taken a literate population for granted. But if we value literacy, imagination, logical thinking and empathy – if we believe these things don't just enrich

individual lives but enrich every human pursuit from science to social work, and promote a tolerant, caring, inventive society – then for the sake of the future we'll urgently put literature – books and reading – back on the agenda.'

I am a member of the Australian Society of Authors (ASA) and support its submission.

Yours sincerely,

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